

# HCR 24

## **Measure Title:**

URGING THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TO ISSUE  
POSTAL STAMPS HONORING THE WORLD WAR II JAPANESE-  
AMERICAN NISEI SOLDIERS, OTHER DISTINGUISHED MILITARY UNITS  
IN UNITED STATES HISTORY, AND AMERICANS WHO FOUGHT AGAINST  
DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE OR NATIONAL ORIGIN.

## **Report Title:**

442<sup>ND</sup> Go Broke; Commemorative Stamps



## JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

HONOLULU CHAPTER

P.O. BOX 1291, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96807

PHONE: 523-8464

*Working For A Greater America*

### Board Members

Shawn L.M. Benton  
President

David Forman  
Vice President

Michael Murata  
Treasurer

Sean Ibara  
Secretary

Susan Arnett  
Alphonso Braggs  
Liann Y. Ebesugawa  
Cathy Lowenberg  
Sonyei Matsuura  
Trisha Nakamura  
Karen Nakasone  
Marcia Sakamoto-Wong  
Yoshie Tanabe

**Legal Counsel**  
Benjamin Kudo

**Advisory Council**  
Allicyn Hikida-Tasaka  
Clayton Ikei  
William Kaneko  
Colbert Matsumoto  
Alan Murakami

**HCR 24: Urging The United States Postal Service to Issue Postal Stamps  
Honoring the World War II Japanese-American Nisei Soldiers, Other  
Distinguished Military Units in United States History, and American's Who  
Fought Against Discrimination Based on Race or National Origin.  
Testimony in Support**

**Hearing: Thursday, April 16, 2009 at 2:00 a.m. in Conf. Rm 229**

To: The Honorable Will Espero, Chair  
The Honorable Robert Bunda, Chair  
Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

The JACL Hawai'i, Honolulu Chapter strongly supports HCR 24, urging the U.S. Postal Service to issue postal stamps honoring the World War II Japanese-American Nisei soldiers, other distinguished military units in U.S. history, and American's who fought against discrimination based on race or national origin.

Founded in 1929, the Japanese American Citizens League is the nation's oldest and largest Asian Pacific American civil rights organization made up of over 20,000 members across the U.S and in Japan. Locally, we are a strong civil rights organization committed to the protection of civil and human rights of all.

On October 24, 2007, the JACL Hawai'i, Honolulu Chapter submitted testimony in support of the City and County Resolution 07-335 (2007), urging the U.S. Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp honoring the Nisei Soldiers of World War II for their service and commitment to the United States of America. We continue to believe that the creation of a U.S. postage stamp commemorating the Nisei soldiers and all other Americans who fought against discrimination based on race or national origin is warranted.

The exemplary record of the Japanese American soldiers of WWII has been well-documented. Their actions represented the highest level of American patriotism as they fought while many of their families were unjustly incarcerated in internment camps. During WWII, the JACL argued for and won the right of Japanese Americans to serve in the U.S. military, resulting in the creation of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team. Composed of approximately 14,000 Japanese American soldiers, the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> fought many battles. One of the most historic was the "Rescue of the Lost Battalion" in October 1944, when the unit led a heroic drive through German lines in the Vosges Mountains to rescue 211 surviving soldiers of the 36<sup>th</sup> Texas Division. In 1945, the courageous actions of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> were critical in breaking the German "Gothic Line." They liberated towns such as Bruyeres, Biffontaine, and Belvedere. In addition, they helped free Holocaust victims from a Dachau concentration camp. The 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> became the most decorated unit for its size and length of service in American history. Its awards include eight Presidential Citations and twenty-one Medals of Honor.

Approximately 6,000 Japanese Americans served in the Pacific Theater in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) of the US Army. These soldiers utilized their knowledge of the Japanese language and culture to defeat the Japanese military in the Pacific. Major General Charles A. Willoughby, General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence chief, estimated that their contributions shortened the war by at least two years and saved countless lives in the process. For this, the MIS was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation. For these reasons, JACL Hawai'i strongly supports HCR 24. Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SMB', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shawn L.M. Benton  
President, JACL Hawai'i, Honolulu Chapter  
Japanese American Citizens League

**From:** Wayne Osako [mailto:wosako@socal.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2009 7:48 PM  
**To:** PSM Testimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in favor of HCR 24

Dear Honorable Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

Please vote in favor of HCR 24 supporting the U.S. postage stamp commemoration of the Japanese American (Nisei) World War II veterans, and other men and women in uniform like them who have changed history through their honor and patriotic sacrifice in service to our nation.

The Postal Service continues to mull over its decision to honor groups of American veterans while annually choosing to commemorate fictional cartoon characters. Just this month, the Postal Service announced a new 2009 stamp series to honor *The Simpsons* animated TV characters, while passing up single stamp proposals for deserving veterans groups such as the Japanese Americans of World War II and the Tuskegee Airmen. Clearly, history has shown that these veterans have a special place in the annals of our nation. May our U.S. commemorative postage stamps also reflect this.

Your vote in favor of HCR 24 will be a vote to honor the proud, diverse history of our nation's Armed Forces which continues today. Some of our best and brightest men and women of all ethnic backgrounds and from all across our country, including from Hawaii, serve in far corners of the earth, putting themselves in harm's way in service to our nation. Minorities who have served with such distinction and honor as the Japanese Americans in World War II helped open the door so that our military would no longer be segregated.

Please vote in favor of HCR 24. Hawaii has led the way for a nationwide state resolutions movement in support of the stamp which so far includes California, Illinois, Washington, Oregon, and Arizona. A second resolution from the Great State of Hawaii will make the Postal Service rethink the way it currently chooses stamps, and, we hope, choose to commemorate the patriotic sacrifice of deserving American veterans.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Wayne Osako  
*Campaign Co-Chair/Coordinator*  
*Nisei WWII Veterans Commemorative Stamp Campaign*

*On Behalf of Campaign Founders Aiko King, Fusa Takahashi, and Chiz Ohira*

**From:** arienne cameros [mailto:amcameros@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2009 12:41 PM  
**To:** PSM Testimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR24

Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs  
Thursday, April 16, 2009  
2:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Espero, Vice Chair Bunda, and Members of the Committee:

My name is **Arienne Cameros** and I am testifying in **SUPPORT** of **HCR24**. I believe that a commemorative stamp honoring the members of the 442nd is important because those men showed their commitment to the United States despite the internment of Japanese private citizens. Honoring the patriotism of these men is important in recognizing a proud, yet shameful moment in our history.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.